

Safe Trailering Guidelines



IMPORTANT: Carefully read and follow all instructions marked with warnings and cautions and read and follow all of the instructions in the quick start guides for your sign and trailer **BEFORE** you take your trailer on the road.

Warning symbols

 **WARNING:** Warning symbols draw your attention to serious safety hazards, which can lead to injury, death, or damage to equipment.


Caution symbols

 **CAUTION:** Cautions advise users of specific actions that could result in damage to equipment or loss of data.

Swaying


 **WARNING:** Swaying is a moderate back and forth movement of a trailer behind a tow vehicle and can lead to dangerous whipping unless you slow down.

Whipping


 **WARNING:** Whipping is the violent back and forth movement of a trailer behind a tow vehicle. Whipping can be caused by excessive speed for the driving conditions, turbulence, over-steering, passing vehicles, uneven roadways, or other issues. There is very little time to recover should whipping occur.




Combination disturbance

 **WARNING:** A combination disturbance is swaying or whipping of a trailer AND the tow vehicle (the combination), caused by issues such as excessive speed for the driving conditions or load, turbulence, over-steering, passing vehicles, uneven roadways, or other issues.

Flat tire

 **WARNING:** In the event of a flat tire, **DO NOT BRAKE**. Take your foot off the gas pedal, slow down to below 25 mph (40 kph), and drive to a safe location where you can stop and change the tire. If necessary, you may need to drive on the flat tire until you can stop safely.


Wheel off the roadway

 **WARNING:** If a wheel goes off the roadway, **DO NOT BRAKE**. Take your foot off the gas pedal, turn on your hazard lights, and slow down to below 25 mph (40 kph). Then slowly steer back onto the roadway when it's safe to do so.

Towing checklist

Go over the following checklist before you go on the road:

Checklist item	What to do
Your tow vehicle	Ensure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">» the tow vehicle is equipped with a suitable trailer hitch and properly maintained. Consult your vehicle manufacturer, an authorized repair facility, or hitch installation company.» The vehicle has adequate towing capacity for the trailer, with a load capacity of up to 1,000 lbs. (454 kg) for ATS 3 and ATS 5 trailers, or 1,500 lbs (680 kg) for trailers with two battery boxes: ATS 5 FLEX Mobile Power Trailers, ALPR Camera-Ready Trailers, and Mobile Surveillance-Ready Trailers.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Consult the vehicle owner's manual for vehicle capacity and any other instructions.» Any modifications to the vehicle are approved for towing by an authorized dealer or inspector.

Checklist item	What to do
Trailer hitch	Ensure that the trailer hitch and ball are securely installed and suited to the tow vehicle. Ensure that the coupler and ball are fastened together securely.
Safety chains	Ensure that the safety chains are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » crossed over under the tongue and hitch, » securely hooked to the tow vehicle, and » not dragging on the pavement.
	WARNING: Pay close attention to safety chain hookup and do not tow the trailer without the safety chains attached. If the trailer tongue becomes detached from the hitch ball while you are driving, properly attached safety chains can prevent a serious accident by supporting the tongue and keeping the trailer attached to your vehicle temporarily until you can come to an emergency stop.
Electrical harnesses	Ensure that the electrical harnesses are properly connected and the signal, tail, and brake lights are working.
Tires	Ensure that all tires on the tow vehicle and trailer are properly inflated. Consult the information on the tire sidewalls and your vehicle's door decal for inflation pressures.
Traveling with your sign	For the ATS 5 family of trailers, fold the upper frame and solar panel into the travel position and secured with locking pins and tie downs. For ATS 3 Trailers, turn the solar panel and sign sideways, into the travel position, parallel to the road.
Loading	Never load cargo on the bed of the trailer.

Safe driving practices

Use the following checklist for safe driving practices with a trailer:

Checklist item	Best practice
Speed	Slow down to avoid accidents and drive defensively. Drive slower than you would without a trailer. The maximum recommended speed with a trailer is 55 mph (90 kph). Anticipate slowdowns in traffic and stops and apply your brakes well in advance. Slow down for curves, road hazards, roadwork, and difficult weather conditions. Don't speed with the trailer. Driving at high speeds can result in sway and whipping if hazards are present. See Whipping, on the previous page . Your towing vehicle and trailer combination has much higher mass and length than your vehicle by itself. Allow extra distance between your vehicle and vehicles ahead and allow extra distance for braking.
Assisted driving	Avoid using cruise control, overdrive, and other assisted driving technologies while towing a trailer.
What to avoid	Never drink or take drugs affecting alertness or sobriety and drive. Never text and drive or allow mobile devices to become distractions while you are driving. Pull over or wait for stops as needed to use them.

Checklist item	Best practice
Passing and turning	Remember, your car and trailer combination is longer than your vehicle alone. Allow adequate extra space when passing vehicles or making sharp turns, such as in parking lots or gas stations. Be vigilant when passing or being passed by other vehicles. Passing vehicles can cause turbulence, leading to a combination disturbance.
For longer trips	Inspect the vehicle and trailer connections at each stop.
Difficult weather conditions	In difficult weather, adjust your driving for the conditions, allowing additional time and space between vehicles.
Backing up	If you need to back the trailer into position, practice beforehand, and have a partner assist you if necessary. Backing up with a trailer is a skill that can take time to learn.

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